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AUTHOR Suitts, Steve
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ABSTRACT

Second in a series of studies examining the patterns of poverty in the South, this report analyses the level of government benefits available to the southern poor from 1980 through 1984. The examination is restricted to four programs: Aid to Families With Dependent Children, Medicaid, Food Stamps, and Supplemental Security Income. The states included in the study were Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Oklahoma, and Maryland. Almost one and a half million recipients of these programs in the South were removed from their rolls from 1980 to 1984. The largest segment of the population to be eliminated from the poverty programs was children. Many who continued to receive aid fell deeper into poverty. Changes in public assistance have contributed to increases in the number of poor in the South, have increased their hardships, and deepened their poverty. Further reductions in government assistance in the next few years run the risk of increasing poverty above the remarkably high levels that have been established in the last four years and of establishing an irreversible decline of the poor who may never be able to escape such an underclass. (PS)

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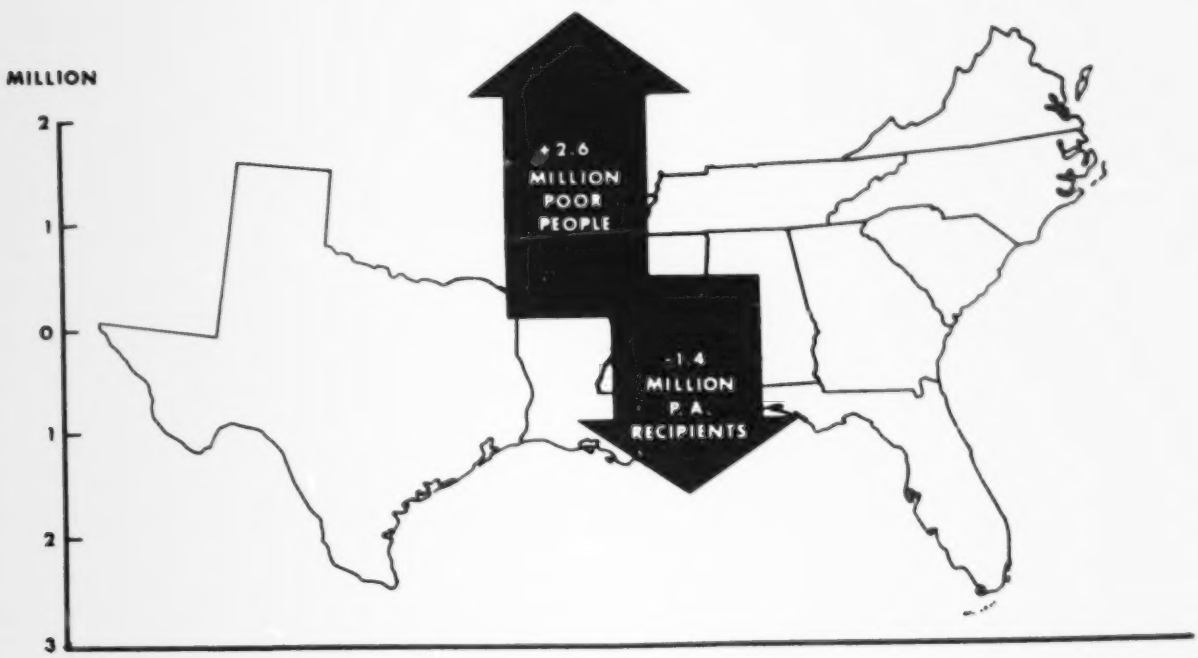
PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AND POVERTY

Change in Number of Poor Persons and Assistance Recipients
(1980–84)



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A Special Report of the Southern Regional Council

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Public Assistance and Poverty

A Special Report of the

Southern Regional Council, Inc.

Prepared by Steve Suitts

March, 1985

Southern Regional Council, Inc.
161 Spring Street, N.W.
Suite 820
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
(404) 522-8764

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INTRODUCTION

Last December the Southern Regional Council published the first of a series of reports examining the patterns of poverty in the South. The study revealed that since 1979, for the first time in 20 years or more, both the rate of poverty and the number of poor persons in the region began to increase sharply.

The report found that the number of poor rose from approximately 9.4 million people in 1979 to 12 million by the start of 1984 in the 11 Southern states.[1] The rate of poverty increased from a little more than 12% to approximately 18%.

In light of these two remarkable trends, this report examines one of three developments that have substantially influenced the patterns of poverty in the South: the level of government benefits available to the poor from 1980 through 1984.[2] While other programs also aim assistance primarily to the poor, the four major programs that are examined here are: Aid to Families With Dependent Children, Medicaid, Food Stamps, and Supplemental Social Security Income. In this report these programs are referenced to as "poverty programs."

The findings of this report cover both the eleven states of the South and four states of the Border South. Those states that border on the South are West Virginia, Kentucky, Oklahoma, and Maryland.

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1. The 11 states of the South are: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

2. Later reports will address two other developments, underemployment and unemployment in the South.

There have been vast changes in the levels of assistance provided to the South's poor during the past four years. The effects of these dramatic changes must be understood in very human terms. Whenever government policies and changes in funding of programs adversely affect the least able and the poor of our society, people of conscience should be concerned.

In our changing economy where jobs cannot be held for a lifetime and degrees are no guarantee for jobs, each person in our society has a considerable self-interest in the question of how government addresses the needs of the poor. Poverty has and can continue to touch people who thought that their families had escaped poverty a generation ago. It is a condition of life that is no longer confined to those whose parents and grandparents were all poor. More so in the future than in the recent past, those who see the poor and the aid which they seek, may well have reason to recall the erstwhile advice: "But for the grace of God, there go I."

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AND THE POOR

Funded largely by the federal government and administered often by state governments, four major programs primarily assist the poor: Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC), Medicaid, Food Stamps, and Supplemental Social Security Income (SSI). While other government assistance, such as public housing, is available, these four programs constitute the largest segment of government expenditures in the federal budget aiding primarily the poor.[1.]

Aid to Families With Dependent Children is a program of cash assistance that goes to families whose incomes are below the poverty threshold or marginally above it. In the South, AFDC is limited practically to families with children where only one parent is home.[2.] The levels of benefits for AFDC families vary by state and usually are determined by the amount of federal funds which must be matched by a lesser amount of state funds.

Medicaid is a program of medical care aimed primarily to the poor and near poor. State and federal funds are combined in the Medicaid program to offer a range of medical assistance to those families and individuals who are eligible and who have medical problems. Guidelines for the Medicaid program limit the nature or kind of medical assistance which can be reimbursed.

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1. See "The Effect of the Administration's Budget . . . On Low Income Americans," Center for Budget Priorities, February 1983.

2. In 1984 the Georgia Legislature authorized future AFDC funds to go to families who are poor with both parents at home. This change in public policy in Georgia is the first such change in the 11 Southern states; while Georgia has changed its public policy, it has not changed its expenditures. To date, AFDC funds in Georgia continue to go to only families with one parent.

The third poverty program is Food Stamps. Funded by the federal government, this program offers the poor and near poor food coupons which are honored at most markets, grocery stores, and supermarkets. Recipients of food stamps offer assistance to the working poor more than any other poverty program.

The Supplemental Social Security Income program offers cash assistance primarily to the elderly and the disabled who are unable to work. Like other programs of Social Security, SSI is operated by the federal government and does not require state administration. It is the smallest of the four programs of public assistance.

Although these programs are directed primarily to the poor, most persons who are poor in the South receive very little or no government assistance. For example, while the number of poor in the South in 1980 exceeded more than 9 million persons, the number receiving AFDC assistance was less than 2.2 million persons.

The poor who do rely upon government assistance are usually the elderly, the disabled, and children in families with only a female head of the household. In Patterns of Poverty,[3.] the Council found that in 1982 almost 80% of the major benefits of poverty programs went to poor households headed by a person 65 years or older, or one female parent with children at home.

3. Patterns of Poverty, Southern Regional Council, December, 1984.

AID TO FAMILIES WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN

In November 1980, almost 2.2 million persons received AFDC in the 11 Southern states.[1] Texas granted funds to 319,000 recipients, the largest number of any Southern state. Arkansas had the lowest number of AFDC recipients, 84,000 women and children. The number of AFDC recipients in most other states range from 170,000 to 220,000. Twenty percent of all AFDC recipients in the nation resided in the 11 Southern states in 1980 (Chart #1).

During the same year the four states of the Border South had 561,000 recipients. Maryland had the largest number -- approximately 220,000 -- almost 2 out of every 5 AFDC recipients in the Border South. West Virginia had the lowest number of AFDC recipients -- less than 78,000.

From 1980 through 1982, the number of AFDC recipients in the South fell rapidly. In two years, the number of persons receiving aid dropped to less than 2 million, a reduction of over 230,000 recipients in the 11 Southern states. In total numbers, Texas, Mississippi, and North Carolina cut their AFDC rolls most severely: in each state more than 32,000 persons were eliminated from government assistance. Alabama, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Arkansas removed more than 20,000 beneficiaries in each state AFDC program (Chart #2).

Florida had the lowest reduction; it reduced AFDC rolls by 5,279 persons. The state of Georgia was, however, the only Southern state which did not reduce the number of AFDC recipients over these two

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1. Numbers of recipients are often rounded in order to ease reading. The reference charts provide the exact figures.

years. In fact, the number of AFDC recipients in Georgia increased by 6,722.

Arkansas purged the largest percentage of AFDC recipients from its rolls: one-fourth of its recipients were removed in two years. Mississippi, Arkansas, and North Carolina reduced its AFDC list by more than 15% (Chart #3).

All states in the Border South reduced their AFDC list from 1980 through 1982. Maryland eliminated 27,000 persons of the total 70,000 denied AFDC in the four border states. Kentucky removed 25,000 persons from its program, and West Virginia showed the smallest reductions. It removed 2,200 from AFDC over the two years.

The elimination of recipients from the AFDC program around the nation during these two years was also significant. More than 670,000 were eliminated. Thirty-seven percent of all reductions across the country came from only the eleven Southern states and almost half of all the national reductions in AFDC recipients came from the 15 states of the South and the Border South.

By the end of 1984, the large scale reductions in AFDC had been partially restored. The number of AFDC recipients in the South rose from 1982 levels by nearly 140,000 recipients. Nonetheless, by the end of 1984 there were almost 100,000 fewer AFDC beneficiaries than in 1980 throughout the 11 Southern states.

The return of benefits from 1982 through 1984 was isolated to a few states of the region. Only in Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas were the number of AFDC beneficiaries increased from 1980 levels. In Florida, the number of AFDC recipients increased by more than 18,000 over the four years. Texas showed a substantial change

from a reduction of 10% of its AFDC rolls in 1980 to an increase of 6% in 1984.

Yet, these increases were not reflected in practice in the other seven Southern states where 1984 levels remained below 1980 levels. In fact, the number of recipients in South Carolina fell below the reductions in 1982, and in North Carolina there was hardly any change from the 1982 levels: one out of every 6 recipients in 1980 were eliminated by 1984.

Arkansas remained the state which reduced AFDC rolls by the largest percentage: one out of four or 25% of the AFDC recipients in 1980 were gone by 1984.

In the Border South, only West Virginia restored the number of beneficiaries of AFDC above the 1980 levels. In Maryland, Kentucky, and Oklahoma the levels of the 1982 reductions were generally maintained or only slightly lowered.

By the end of 1984, one out of every 20 of the AFDC recipients of 1980 had been eliminated in the South. In the Border South, the number of recipients had been reduced by 7%.

The changes in budgets, practices, and policies also vitally affected those women and children in the South who continued to receive aid throughout the four years. Most Southern states increased very little the benefits for each recipient or reduced them.

From 1980 to 1982, two Southern states actually cut benefit levels. Arkansas reduced its monthly expenditure for each recipient of AFDC from $51 to $44, and Texas changed its $36 monthly payment per recipient to $34. Alabama maintained the same level of benefits, $39, over the two years (Charts #4 and #5).

The increases in monthly payments for each recipient of AFDC in other Southern states were quite small. Tennessee added less than $1 in benefits over the two years. Mississippi, the Southern state with the lowest monthly payment in 1980 -- $30 -- increased its payments by slightly more than $1. The increases in all other Southern states, but one, were $5 or less. Georgia increased its level of monthly benefits by $10 per recipient from 1980 through 1982.

The Border South also offered only small or no increases to AFDC beneficiaries during the same two years. Kentucky reduced its payments from $71 to $69 per month per recipient. Oklahoma increased its payments only by $3 and Maryland enlarged the average monthly check by $9.

By 1984 most Southern states had not made any substantial increases in monthly payments of AFDC. In fact, the amount of benefits for each recipient dropped slightly after 1982 in Virginia, Tennessee, and Louisiana. Although it had improved since 1982, Arkansas maintained a lower level of benefit in 1984 than in 1980. The average monthly benefit dropped $5 in Arkansas over four years.

The largest increases over time were experienced by AFDC recipients in Georgia whose average monthly payment increased by $14, enlarging the 1980 payment of $54 to a total of $68 per month per recipient in 1984. Also, Texas reversed its decrease in monthly payments and enlarged its payments over four years by a total of $11.[1]

1. Texas passed a Constitutional Amendment which removed the ceiling on state funds which could be spent for public assistance. This constitutional change permitted the increase in the number of recipients and the level of payments.

In the Border South the amount of benefits in Kentucky remained $1 lower in 1984 than it was in 1980. Benefits virtually did not change in West Virginia over the four years, and only Maryland increased its benefits by at least $10 per month for each recipient.[2.]

Over the past four years changes in the AFDC program in the South have been substantial and costly to its beneficiaries. During the first two years after 1980, the number of recipients in the South fell dramatically by almost a quarter of a million people, women and children. By 1980 the reduction in the number of beneficiaries had been softened. Yet, almost 100,000 people remained off the rolls by the end of 1984.

Equally significant is the reduction or stagnating of recipient benefits for those who continue to get AFDC. Over four years the amount of aid to each recipient declined in one state and increased less than $10 per recipient in all but two states. On average, the AFDC grant to each recipient increased by only $6, and most of this increase was given only to recipients in three Southern states, Georgia, Florida, and Texas. Arkansas made the most dramatic cuts in the levels of both the numbers of beneficiaries and the amounts of benefits. It cut AFDC rolls by one-fourth and reduced its level of benefits by $5 per recipient per month. Beneficiaries of AFDC in Alabama, South Carolina, and North Carolina were also particularly hard hit by changes since 1980.

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2. National data for AFDC in 1982 is not yet available.

MEDICAID

Children are the primary recipients of medical care paid by Medicaid. Women, the elderly, and the disabled, are also other significant recipients who, because of their low income, receive medical care through this federal-state program.

In 1980, more than twenty-one and a half million recipients throughout the United States received medical care through Medicaid. One in five -- more than 4 million -- were residents of the eleven Southern states. More than a million Medicaid recipients also came from the four states of the Border South in 1980.

From 1980 to the beginning of 1984[1] the number of Medicaid recipients dropped significantly in the United States, the South, and the Border South. In the United States, the number of recipients treated by Medicaid in 1980 dropped by more than 100,000 through 1983. The reductions in the number of Medicaid recipients were even more pronounced in the 11 states of the South. The 4.2 million recipients of Medicaid dropped by 155,000 persons from 1980 until the start of 1984 in the South. The reduction in the number of Medicaid recipients was most significant in South Carolina where the number of recipients was reduced by 61,000. In Texas, the reduction over time was more than 36,000, and in Arkansas, it was more than 32,000. North Carolina

1. Reliable data on the number of persons receiving Medicaid assistance during 1984 are not available at this time. Some data for 1984 is available for persons who are covered by Medicaid (see Chart #7). In this analysis there are two different categories of Medicaid patients: those persons who actually received Medicaid assistance in 1983 and those persons who are covered and eligible to receive Medicaid, if medical needs arise as of 1984.

also reduced its Medicaid rolls by more than 27,000 (Chart #6).

In fact, the number of Medicaid recipients was reduced throughout the South except in Florida and Georgia. In Florida, the number increased by 54,000 and in Georgia, the number enlarged by almost 11,000.

The reductions in the Border South were also substantial from 1980 until 1984. The Medicaid rolls in these four states were reduced by roughly 50,000 persons with substantial reductions in West Virginia, Kentucky and Oklahoma. Each of these states reduced Medicaid by almost 22,000 persons. Only in Maryland did the Medicaid program increase over time. In that state, a little more than 15,000 persons were treated in 1983 than in 1980.

More recent data about the number of persons covered by Medicaid (those eligible to be treated by Medicaid if a permissible medical need arises) confirm that reductions in Medicaid assistance in the South are substantial. From 1980 through 1984, more than 170,000 individuals were eliminated from coverage of Medicaid in the South. The most substantial reductions in coverage were in North Carolina where almost 50,000 persons were eliminated. In Arkansas more than 44,000 were eliminated over the last four years. In Virginia and South Carolina, the number of persons covered by Medicaid in each state was reduced by more than 40,000 (Chart #7).

The elimination of persons from the Medicaid program included most of the South -- all states except Florida, Georgia, and Texas. In Texas more than 39,000 person were added to coverage by Medicaid by 1984, and in Florida the additional number was more than 37,000. In Georgia, a little more than 7,500 persons were added to coverage. In all other Southern states, the numbers of persons covered by Medicaid

were reduced.

During the past four years the cost of medical care for each Medicaid recipient increased substantially;[2] however, the level of Medicaid payments does not directly affect recipients as does AFDC payments. Medicaid payments usually go directly to hospitals, physicians, or other health care providers.

A review of the changes in Medicaid regulations and practices during the last four years evidences that the level of health care for Medicaid recipients has declined because of the increasing cost charged by health care providers. Throughout the South, limits have been placed on the full range of medical services covered by Medicaid. Today there are limits on the numbers of physician visits, the amount of prescription drugs, the number of other professional treatment, and the duration of hospital and out-patient care. In addition, there is now a requirement for co-payments -- a payment by the Medicaid recipient in order to receive care.

In effect, the cost of Medicaid to the recipient has increased through co-payments, increases in deductibles, and limits on covered medical services. Despite the increases in the cost of the program, the recipients of Medicaid in 1984 received less care at a higher cost than recipients in 1980.

2. The average cost of medical care per recipient in the South in 1980 was roughly $885. The cost in 1983 had risen to $1275. Medicaid Recipients, Fiscal Year 1980 and Fiscal Year 1983, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; released July 1984 and August 1984.

FOOD STAMPS

Food Stamps are available to families and persons based, almost entirely, on levels of income. Nationally the level of eligibility for food stamps has often exceeded the poverty threshold to include other low income families. For example, families with incomes 25% higher than the poverty level have often been eligible for small amounts of food stamps in the past. In the South, especially since 1979,[1] the majority of recipients of food stamps have had incomes below the poverty level. For a variety of reasons, the working poor probably have received more benefits from food stamps than from any other major government program in recent years.

By the beginning of 1981, 23 million Americans received food stamps. Thirty-two percent, a little less than 7.2 million, were Southerners. The Border South housed 6% of the nation's food stamp recipients (Chart #9).

Circumstances had changed decidedly in the South and the nation by 1983. More than 2 million recipients of food stamps across the country had been eliminated and 679,000 of them were dropped in the South. The reductions in the South were widespread: in 8 states the number of persons in the Food Stamp program was reduced markedly. In the three states where increases occurred, Texas, Louisiana, and Alabama, the gains in the number of recipients were relatively small

1. In 1979 the regulations concerning food stamps were changed so that recipients no longer had to purchase food stamps with a small amount of money. After the implementation of this change, there was in the South a considerable increase in the number of poor receiving food stamps. Because of the implementaitn of this change during 1980, the month used to compare changes in food stamps is March 1981 and not November 1980. See Too Poor for Food Stamps, Southern Regional Council, 1979.

(Chart #10).

In contrast, the numbers increased in the Border South by more than 59,000 recipients from early 1981 to late 1983. Only in Maryland, were 57,000 people eliminated from the food stamp list.

By the September of 1984, the reductions in the numbers of persons receiving food stamps had enlarged in the nation and the South. More than 3.2 million people had been removed from the Food Stamp program throughout the country, and more than 1 million of them were Southerners.

Ten of the 11 states of the South witnessed reductions in the numbers of food stamp recipients. In Florida, more than 300,000 people, or almost 40% of the total Food Stamp recipients in the state, were eliminated. In North Carolina, 176,000 people were removed from food stamp rolls. The reductions equal 28% of all the earlier Food Stamp recipients. One in four of all recipients were also removed in Tennessee (Chart #11).

In Georgia and Virginia, the reductions dropped one in five of all beneficiaries, and in South Carolina and Arkansas 17% of each state's recipients were eliminated by late 1984. Only in Louisiana did the number of recipients increase in the South -- by 7% over four years.

Throughout the region one out of every 6 recipients of Food Stamps in early 1981 were removed by late 1984.

The pattern in the Border South continued to differ from the nation and the South. By 1984, the number of recipients in the Border South had increased by 3%, with substantial gains in Oklahoma and West Virginia; nevertheless, Maryland's Food Stamp program was cut over nearly four years by 16%.

The recipients who remained in the Food Stamp program were also adversely affected during this period. In all Southern states the value of the food stamps increased only slightly, or actually decreased.

From early 1981 to late 1984 the monthly value of food stamps, on average, dropped in 5 states of the South. Arkansas cut the amount of food stamps for each recipient by $2.07 per month -- a reduction of 5% in the amount of Food Stamps received in early 1981. During the same time, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee who reduced the amount of food stamps per recipient. The reductions ranged from 73 cents to $1.29 per month for each recipient.

Most of the increases which did occur were below $1.50 per month for each recipient. Increases in Virginia and Georgia were 3%. Texas increased its monthly payments by only 44 cents during roughly four years. Only Louisiana showed a substantial increase. It enlarged the value of food stamps for each recipient by $4.40 per month.

All told, the value of food stamps in the South enlarged by only 95 cents over almost four years.

Every state in the Border South, however, increased the value of the food stamps available to each recipient. West Virginia increased the value of its food stamps over time by $4; Maryland enlarged the value of its food stamps by $2.34; and Oklahoma pushed up the amount for recipients by almost $3. On average, the four states gave each recipient $1.92 more food stamps in late 1984 than in early 1981.

During almost four years, the nation and the South experienced deep reductions in the number of Food Stamps recipients. More than one million recipients were removed from Food Stamp rolls in the South

during this time. More than 3.2 million were eliminated throughout the nations. At the same time, remaining Southern recipients received only an increase of 95 cents in the value of food stamps during this period. In the nation, the increase was only 60 cents.

SUPPLEMENTAL SOCIAL SECURITY INCOME

Social Security Supplemental Income is a federal program that aids primarily the elderly and the disabled. It is a cash assistance program assisting the smallest number of persons among the four major poverty programs. In the United States in 1980, 4.1 million persons received aid under SSI. Thirty-six percent were recipients in the South.

Over the last four years the number of SSI recipients in the country has declined by 109,000 persons. In the South, more than 33,000 people have been eliminated from the program (Charts #14 and #15). The decline in SSI enrollment in the region was shared by most states in the region although three Southern states did increase the nubmer of SSI recipients.

The largest cuts in the program came in Louisiana where 11,672 people were eliminated over four years. Almost one and ten beneficiaries in Louisiana were removed. Texas dropped more than 11,000 SSI recipients and Arkansas decreased its number by 5,243. The program in other states, where reductions were made, ranged from 2% to 3% of the 1980 enrollment.

The number of SSI beneficiaries in Florida, Virginia, and South Carolina, actually increased. All gains were small: in Florida and Virginia the increasewas approximately 3% and only 1% in South Carolina.

In the Border South, the pattern was mixed, although on average the number of SSI beneficiaries dropped by 3,845, or 2% of the 1980 regional levels. Most of the reductions came in Oklahoma where 12% of the 1980 enrollment for SSI was eliminated. Also, there was a small

decrease in Kentucky. In part, these reductions were offset by small increases in the enrollment of SSI in West Virginia and in Maryland.

Unlike other direct assistance programs for the poor, payments to SSI beneficiaries increased notably in most states in the South from 1980 to 1984. In fact, the amount of SSI benefits increased during this period faster in the South than in the nation. Still, SSI payments in the South, at the end of 1984, remained only 80% of the amount of the average payments in the nation to SSI beneficiaries.

In Florida, the increase in the monthly check for SSI beneficiaries rose from $155 per month to $207 per month. Most gains were in that range. The increase in 9 states ranged from 31% to 36%. In Louisiana, the increase was a relatively small 11%. The change in the amount of SSI grants in the Border South was also larger than the nation's. Maryland and Kentucky increased the amount of their payments by 36%; West Virginia escalated its monthly payments by 35%; and Kentucky pushed up its monthly checks to SSI recipients by 33%.

CHANGES IN THE NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS
OF MAJOR POVERTY PROGRAMS IN THE SOUTH SINCE 1980

During the last four years the reduction in number of recipients of public assistance aimed primarily at the poor in the South has been formidable: almost 1.5 million people in the 11 Southern states have been eliminated from poverty programs since 1980. Although no data exist for the actual reductions in all these programs throughout the nation, the Council projects that almost 4 million recipients were cut from the four major poverty programs since 1980 throughout the country.

More than 3 out of 4 of these eliminated recipients came out of the Food Stamp program. In that program alone, more than 1 million Southerners and 3 million Americans were cut off from the program. The next largest reductions were in Medicaid, AFDC, and lastly the SSI program.

Table A

Reductions In the Recipients of Major Poverty Programs
In the South
1980 - 1984

Program	Number of Recipients	Percentage of Change In Recipients
AFDC	- 94,948	- 4%
Medicaid	- 173,169	- 4%
Food Stamps	- 1,127,813	- 16%
SSI	- 32,720	- 2%
TOTAL	- 1,428,650	N.A.

In the Border South, more than 50,000 recipients were eliminated from the four poverty programs since 1980.

The reductions in the South were spread throughout most states. Ten of the 11 Southern states experienced a net reduction in the total number of recipients of all four programs over roughly four years. Only in Louisiana was there a net increase in the number of recipients of the major poverty programs. Yet, more than 300,000 recipients were eliminated from poverty programs in Florida and 250,000 in North Carolina. In Tennessee, more than 200,000 were eliminated. In Virginia and South Carolina, the numbers of each state totaled more than 140,000.

The Border South also experienced smaller reductions except in Maryland where the number of recipients decreased by 68,000. In Oklahoma, however, only 1,300 recipients were eliminated, and in West Virginia the numbers increased by 16,818.

The changes were not evenly distributed in each program. Most states experienced small reductions in the number of SSI recipients from 1980 to 1984. The largest decreases were experienced in the food stamp programs although both Medicaid and AFDC were reduced by substantial percentages during the past four years.

In the AFDC program the recipients in Arkansas felt the largest percentage decrease. Over four years 25% of the AFDC recipients were eliminated in that one state. Seventeen percent of the recipients in South Carolina and 16% in North Carolina were eliminated. Alabama reduced its AFDC rolls by 14% over the same time.

Table B

Ranking of the Southern States and Border Southern States
By Reductions In Number of Recipients In Poverty Programs
1980 - 1984

	Southern States	Reduced Number of Recipients
1.	Florida	- 306,491
2.	North Carolina	- 258,801
3.	Tennessee	- 226,943
4.	Virginia	- 145,726
5.	South Carolina	- 141,657
6.	Arkansas	- 123,054
7.	Georgia	- 99,212
8.	Alabama	- 77,054
9.	Mississippi	- 68,309
10.	Texas	- 9,412
11.	Louisiana	+ 28,009
	Border Southern States	
1.	Maryland	- 67,645
2.	Kentucky	- 7,944
3.	Oklahoma	- 1,293
4.	West Virginia	+ 16,818

SOURCE: Chart 19.

South Carolina and Arkansas also experienced the largest percentage decreases in Medicaid. More than 20% of the recipients of Medicaid in South Carolina and 15% in Arkansas were reduced since 1980. Other high percentages of decrease were experienced in North Carolina.

In Food Stamps, Florida's program was reduced by the largest percentage of recipients.[1] Thirty-seven percent of all food stamp recipients in Florida were removed in less than four years. North Carolina removed 28% of its food stamp recipients, and Tennessee eliminated 26%. Both Virginia and Georgia eliminated 1 out of 5 of their recipients.

While it experienced relatively small reductions in other programs, Louisiana cut the largest percentage of recipients from SSI. Louisiana led the South with a reduction of 9% followed by Arkansas which reduced its SSI rolls by 7%.

In the Border South, Oklahoma and Maryland reduced their AFDC rolls by 14% and 12% although West Virginia increased its AFDC recipients by 20%. In Medicaid, the largest reductions were experienced in Oklahoma and Kentucky. Maryland was the exception with an increase of 9% in the number of Medicaid recipients. Interestingly, three of the Border South states increased their number of food stamp recipients while only Maryland decreased the number by 16%. In Oklahoma, the numbers increased by 20% and in West Virginia, by 10%. On the other hand, all but one state of the Border South decreased its numbers of SSI recipients. Oklahoma reduced its program by 12% and Kentucky reduced its rolls by 3%. Only Maryland increased the number

1. Some seasonal aspects of migrant labor may be a factor in the large decreasing numbers in Florida.

Table C

Percent Change In Number of Recipients
Four Major Poverty Programs In the South
1980 - 1984

	AFDC	Medicaid	Food Stamps	SSI
United States	- 3%	- 1%	-14%	- 3%
South	- 4%	- 4%	-16%	- 2%
Alabama	-14%	- 4%	- 2%	- 3%
Arkansas	-25%	-15%	-17%	- 7%
Florida	+ 7%	+11%	-37%	+ 3%
Georgia	+ 4%	+ 3%	-20%	- 2%
Louisiana	+ 3%	- 2%	+ 7%	- 9%
Mississippi	-12%	- 5	- 6%	- *%
North Carolina	-16%	- 7%	-28%	- 2%
South Carolina	-17%	-21%	-17%	+ 1%
Tennessee	- 8%	- 4%	-26%	- 2%
Texas	+ 6%	- 5%	- 5%	- 4%
Virginia	- 8%	- 4%	-21%	+ 3%
Border South	- 7%	- 4%	+ 3%	- 2%
West Virginia	+20%	-11%	+10%	*%
Kentucky	- 9%	- 5%	+ 5%	- 3%
Oklahoma	-14%	- 8%	+20%	-12%
Maryland	-12%	+ 5%	-16%	+ 3%

SOURCE: Charts #3, 8, 11, and 16.

of SSI recipients, by 3%.

Among the 11 Southern states, recipients throughout the four poverty programs were more likely to be cut off in Arkansas, South Carolina, and North Carolina than in other states. In North Carolina, 16% of its AFDC recipients, 7% of its Medicaid recipients, 28% of its Food Stamp recipients, and 2% of its SSI recipients were cut. In Arkansas, 25% of the AFDC recipients, 15% of the Medicaid beneficiaries, 17% of the food stamp users, and 7% of the SSI beneficiaries were cut over four years. In South Carolina, the cuts were: AFDC, 17%; Medicaid, 21%; food stamps, 17%; SSI benefits, 1%. Tennessee and Virginia, were also states where substantial reductions were made in three or more programs. More than any other state in the South, recipients of the poverty programs in Louisiana were less likely to be removed during the last four years.[2.]

More than any other group, children were most often eliminated from the programs of public assistance. In the South, more than 677,000 of the 1.4 million recipients taken off poverty programs were probably children. In the nation, more than a million were likely children. The other groups primarily affected were women and the elderly.

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2. This fact is not likely to continue in Louisiana with the state government facing a possible deficit due to sharply reduced oil and gas tax revenues. "Slow Speed Ahead," Economic Review, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, February 1985, p. 54.

Table D

Children Reduced From Major Poverty Programs*
In the South, Border South, and the Nation
1980 - 1984

	AFDC	Medicaid	Stamps	SSI	Total
South	- 71,221	- 75,416	-530,072	- 500	-677,209
Border South	- 15,500	- 14,200	+ 10,500	- 250	- 19,450
United States	-150,000	-100,000	-1,050,000	-1,000	1,301,000

*estimated

CHANGES IN THE LEVEL OF BENEFITS OF POVERTY PROGRAMS SINCE 1980

The 1.4 million recipients in the South whose benefits have been eliminated since 1980 involve only a small portion of those whose income and benefits have been adversely influenced by changes in public assistance. All recipients who continued to get benefits from 1980 through 1984 were affected because of reductions and stagnation in the level of cash and in kind benefits. Most receiving benefits in 1980 and continuing to receive them in 1985 had their ability to purchase food, clothing, and decent shelter drastically impaired, and many have had medical care significantly limited.

The levels of AFDC payments in the South have historically been low. In 1965, AFDC payments in the South were 54% of the $33.83 that was the average monthly payment per recipient throughout the United States.[1] In 1980, the average Southern state's AFDC payment was 52% of the $99 which was the national average. Viewed another way, the yearly AFDC payments for a family of four in the South in 1980 provided an income that was 70% <u>below</u> the threshold of poverty. AFDC payments were so low that if such a family had received an increase of 300% in its AFDC payments, they would still be poor in 1985.

As a matter of fact, most AFDC recipients received only very small increases or actual reductions in payments from 1980 through 1984. When these small changes in stagnating AFDC payments are compared with the increases in the cost of living, for non-food items

1. See <u>Public Assistance in the South</u>, Southern Regional Council, 1967.

the AFDC recipients lost much of their buying power. Over these years, the AFDC recipient in the South lost 19% or one-fifth of the real value of the cash payments. In Arkansas, AFDC recipients lost 40% of the real value of their monthly checks; cost of clothing, transportation, utilities, shelter (all items but food), went up 30% while the amount of the monthly payment for the average recipient was decreased by 10%.[2.] In Alabama "real" AFDC benefits dropped by almost one-third, and in Tennessee the real value of benefits were cut by 30%. Of the 11 Southern states, only in Georgia and Texas were real AFDC benefits reduced by less than 10% (Chart #20).

In effect, the nearly 2 million recipients of AFDC payments in the South had their benefits cut by one-fifth over the last four years.

In the Border South, reductions in the benefits of AFDC were also sizable. Because benefit levels remained the same during the last four years in West Virginia, AFDC recipients there experienced a real cut of 30% in their payments. Kentucky recipients felt a 29% reduction in the real value of AFDC payments; and in Oklahoma the value of the payments were reduced effectively by one-fourth.

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2. No statistics are published yearly by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the source of data on cost-of-living, for regional differences in the cost of living; nonetheless, yearly data for the cost of living in major urban areas do permit some limited, regional comparisons. In examining changes in the cost of living of the average large U. S. city with the Southern cities,it was found that the cost of living increased more rapidly from 1980 through 1984 in Southern cities than in the average city of the United States. The cost of living in Houston, Atlanta, Dallas - Ft. Worth, and Miami increased at a higher rate than the cost of living in the nation's cities during the last four years. Under the circumstances, the use of a national rate for the cost of living in the analyses of this report may in fact underestimate the decline in real value of benefits from poverty programs.

The 6 million food stamp recipients in the South also endured a substantial reduction in the real value of their benefits. In the 11 Southern states the average recipient of food stamps experienced a decline of 19% in the real purchasing power of food stamps. In Arkansas the value of a recipient's food stamps decreased by 5% for 1984. The cost of food during nearly four years increased by 21%. In effect, the coupons of food stamps for each recipient were cut 26%.

The "real" value of food stamps also sharply declined in Tennessee, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Alabama. In these states the value of food stamps decreased in real terms by 24% or 23% thorugh 1984. Only in Louisiana was the real reduction in benefits as low as 10%. In Mississippi, real benefits of food stamps were cut 15%, a small reduction only in comparison. The next smallest reductions were in Georgia and Virginia where the value of food stamps were reduced by 18% (Chart #21).

In the Border South, Kentucky food stamp recipients experienced the largest real reductions -- 18%. Throughout the four states of the Border States, food stamp recipients had the value of their benefits cut effectively by 16%.

For those nearly 2 million recipients who probably received both AFDC payments and food stamps -- mostly families headed by the elderly or single women with children at home[3.] -- the decrease in the real, combined level of benefits was also formidable. Across the South, the average recipient of these combined benefits experienced a reduction

3. See Patterns of Poverty, Southern Regional Council, December 1984.

of 22% in their real value. In eight states, the reduction in real benefits exceeded 20% (Chart #22).

Here, too, Arkansas had the largest cuts in real benefits. Recipients of both food stamps and AFDC in this state had real cuts of 36% due to the reduction of assistance and the increases in the cost of living of the last four years. In Alabama and Tennessee real benefits of both AFDC and food stamps were cut by nearly one-third. In Louisiana and Virginia the ability of a mother to provide food, clothing, and shelter with the assistance of food stamps and AFDC were cut by 25% or 26%.

Only in Georgia and Texas were the reductions in the real value of these two benefits as low as 15%. They were 13% and 15%.

In effect, for every $5 of AFDC payments and food stamps which Southern recipients had in 1980, they had only $4 in the beginning of 1985.

In the Border South the reductions in combined benefits were even more severe. On average, the real benefits of food stamps and AFDC payments were reduced by 25%. Kentucky recipients with combined benefits experienced a real decline of 29%. In West Virginia the decrease of was 25%; and in Oklahoma, it was 22%.

At the end of 1984 Medicaid had not experienced a decline in the cost of medical care. In fact, the cost of medical care under Medicaid increased during the last four years and, with that increase, has come an increase in the cost of Medicaid and a decline in available care for the recipients themselves. Because of federal legislation and reduced budgets, each Southern state has instituted requirements of co-payments before Medicaid services are rendered to recipients. Requiring recipients to pay from 50 cents to several

dollars for services, drugs, or care, these policy co-payments have decreased the value of Medicaid for recipients by increasing the cost of the services to the recipients themselves.

Other changes have limited available medical services each month or during each year. Arkansas now has a limit on the number of medical visits each month. More than one state now limits the amount of drugs which can be prescribed by a doctor under Medicaid. Other states are excluding or severely limiting services such as homecare or supplemental medical assistance.

These changes of policy and practice cannot be translated accurately into any specific, meaningful number. Yet, these changes clearly have reduced the medical care available to those who continue to be eligible for Medicaid. And, they are changes which affect millions of poor.

Only in the SSI program -- cash assistance for largely the elderly and disabled -- has there been an increase in the real value of benefits since 1980. In most Southern states increases in the actual payments range from 31% to 36%. In Mississippi, for example, SSI beneficiaries in 1984 received checks that had increased 31%. When compared with the cost of living, beneficiaries in the South recieved an actual increase of 5%.

In the Border South, SSI beneficiaries received real increases of 4% to 7% in their payments.

The real increases in SSI benefits throughout the South and the Border South affected the smallest number of recipients.

CHANGES IN PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AND POVERTY

The threshold of poverty is defined as a level of cash income which has been updated each year since 1964 to reflect the increases in the cost of living. The ceiling of poverty for a family of four in 1980 was $7,412. By the start of 1984, the threshold of poverty for the same family had increased to $10,178. Thus, the level of poverty remains as it always has been except for adjustments made to reflect increases in the cost of living. In this way, poverty remains the same definition.

In determining if a family or person is below the poverty line, only cash income is computed by the U.S. Census Bureau. Families with low incomes who receive food stamps, Medicaid, or other forms of public assistance that are provided as in-kind contributions do not have the value of such assistance computed in determining their level above or below poverty. Some critics believe that the failure to compute the value of in-kind, government contributions causes the level of poverty to be overstated nowadays; however, in recent years the non-poor increasingly have received in-kind contributions from private and public sources which are not counted as income. For example, the cash value of health and life insurance plans provided by employers or unions and pensions sponsored by employers or unions are not counted as income for the non-poor. Nor do the non-poor count the value of business lunches or other business meals as income.[1]

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1. Generally, when the major in-kind contributions of the poor and the non-poor are compared, a similar percentage of each group appears to receive substantial, in-kind contributions. This finding suggests that the relative status of the poor and non-poor would remain much the same if all in-kind contributions for both groups were counted as income. See Patterns of Poverty, Southern Regional Council, December 1984.

Still, the elimination or the reduction of in-kind benefits can have an indirect effect upon the number of poor and can have a direct, adverse influence upon the lives of the poor. The elimination of Medicaid coverage for one spouse, for example, can put such financial strain on a near-poor family so that over time the working spouse's income is unable to cover the increased cost. A family cut off from food stamps in 1981 does not experience a reduction in income, but it does increase the family's expenses without increasing its income. Such added cost may mean that a working single parent must give up child care in 1982 and, perhaps, ultimately her job in 1983. Over three years, such a family could become poor because of their cut from food stamps.

The consequences of eliminating in-kind benefits are obviously more severe over time. For a working, near-poor father, the loss of food stamps for his family may mean that the added cost of food bills over three years requires that the re-training must be dropped. A future with missed job advancements can mean stalled wages for a family that sinks into poverty.

These kinds of problems can indirectly create both new poor and new, real hardships for the people with low incomes, above the poverty line. But they are problems and developments which cannot be easily measured in precise numbers. Yet, in light of the recent increase of poverty in the South and the nation, it is probable that a significant number of people have fallen below the poverty line over the last four years because of the removal of in-kind government benefits. This general conclusion appears supported by the fact that sharp reductions in the number of recipients of the Food Stamp Program and Medicaid

have been sustained for more than two years, and often, four years. Over such time, the increase of medical expenses or the substantial jump in food cost for a family could have a decided consequence on the family's ability to earn new income and stay above poverty.

Unlike food stamps, AFDC and SSI benefits are cash payments that are computed in determining a person's level of income above or below poverty. The elimination or reduction of these benefits can directly effect the numbers of poor.

The 2.2 million AFDC recipients in the South -- unlike SSI recipients -- were by definition poor in 1980. Their cash assistance from the government is usually their only source of income. In fact, most Southern states reported in 1984 that less than 10% of their AFDC recipients had earnings or income other than public assistance.[2.] Thus, access to benefits and their level of benefits primarily influence the poverty status of AFDC recipients.

In the last four years almost 100,000 people were cut from AFDC in the South. From 1980 to 1982 three times that number had been reduced from AFDC rolls. All of these families are, no doubt, poorer today than they were in 1980.

Equally significant, the reduction of AFDC benefits for those who remain recipients has deepened the level of poverty of families already poor. Because the level of AFDC payments increased very little during the past four years, many poor families who depend upon that payment as its single source of cash income fell deeper into poverty because of the increasing cost of living. A family of four

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2. "Aid to Families With Dependent Children . . . In the Southern States: A Comparative Review," a report of the Fiscal Affairs and Government Operations Committee, The Southern Legislative Conference, October 1984.

receiving AFDC in the South had its income reduced, in effect, by 25% over four years. If the family's income was 25% below the poverty ceiling in 1980, the family would have dropped to an income that is 50% below the poverty ceiling in 1984 (Chart #25).

In Arkansas, the average AFDC family would have dropped 30% further into poverty from 1980 to 1984. In every Southern state the average AFDC family declined 20% to 30% deeper into poverty over the last four years.

The trend towards deepening poverty was not confined to the South. In the Border South, where historically AFDC payments have been larger, the drop in poverty status was on average 27%. In Oklahoma, Kentucky, and West Virginia, where AFDC payments hardly increased, an average family of four, in effect, lost more than $2,700 of income in four years.

SSI beneficiaries, on the other hand, maintained or slightly increased their status. Yet, except in Florida, the increases in SSI payments were not substantial enough to improve the recipients' income status. At the same time, those recipients -- almost 40,000 -- who were cut off from the program had their income status substantially affected.

Overall, changes in public assistance over the last four years have contributed to an increase in poverty in the South. Perhaps the most substantial effect, however, has been to increase the hardships of the poor and to deepen significantly the poverty of those who were already poor. These consequences of reductions in public assistance appear to apply equally to the South and the Border South.

CONCLUSIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

Profound changes have been implemented in the four major programs of public assistance for the poor in the last four years in the South and in the nation. Almost one and a half million recipients of these programs in the South had been removed from 1980 through 1984. Based upon historical relationships between the South and the nation, it is likely that almost four million persons in the country have been removed from these same programs. Roughly two out of three of these recipients were eliminated from the food stamp program. The largest segment of the population to be eliminated from the poverty programs is children. Probably more than 350,000 children have been denied public assistance in the last four years in the South.

Just as significant, many of the several million poor who continued to receive aid fell deeper into poverty and experienced new real hardships due to the reductions in their benefits. More than two million AFDC poor recipients in the South fell more than 25% further below the poverty line from 1980 through 1984 because of reduced or stagnating payments. A large number -- perhaps as many as four million poor -- faced stagnating benefits and an increasing cost-of-living. Thus, in the South, "real benefits" of AFDC were reduced by 19% and the real benefits of food stamps dropped also by 19%.

Viewed another way, a family of four in the South receiving AFDC payments had a cash income that was 63% <u>below</u> poverty. By the end of 1984, that family had dropped to an income 74% <u>below</u> the poverty threshold.

Under these circumstances it is probable that changes in public assistance have contributed to the increases in the number of poor in

the South. The number of new poor caused by these changes is unclear, however. It is more certain that the changes in public assistance of the last four years have deepened the poverty of millions who were poor in 1980. A family of four relying upon AFDC in the South saw their relative income fall by more $2,500. Thus in Mississippi, AFDC payments gave a family of four an income of only 22% of the poverty line. By 1984 the same family's income had dropped to 16% of the poverty line (or 84% <u>below</u> poverty). If that family's cash income were to increase six times, the family would still be poor.

Even the families receiving both AFDC and food stamps fell significantly behind. In the South the value of both food stamps and AFDC gave the average Southern family of four receiving both a contribution that was 60% of the poverty level. Four years later, the average Southern family's AFDC and food stamps gave them benefits that would equal only 45% of the poverty threshold (or 55% <u>below</u> poverty).

The limits on medical care were severe. More than 170,000 persons are no longer eligible for Medicaid although they were in 1980. Every Southern state has placed co-payments and severe limits on one aspect or another of medical care for the poor. After four years of reductions, Medicaid in the South goes to fewer poor, costs more, and is more sharply limited in its services than it was in 1980.

Only SSI benefts remained equal to the cost of living over the last four years. Yet, even there more than 30,000 individuals were reduced from the program in the South and more than 100,000 were cut in the nation.

When put together, these changes appear sweeping and fundamental: hundreds of thousands of recipients have been cut off and more

millions have fallen considerably deeper into poverty.

Every poor person who was receiving public assistance in 1980 has experienced a real and significant sacrifice in their well-being in the last four years. Either they no longer receive benefits today or they are able to buy no more three-fourths of the food, clothing, and shelter they were able to secure through benefits in 1980.

These changes mark a radical departure in government policy governing poverty programs. Never in the last 20 years of poverty programs has the federal government set in motion changes that have contributed directly to increases in the number of poor and that have deepened significantly the poverty of those who were already poor. Further reductions in government assistance in the next few years run the risk of increasing poverty above the remarkably high levels that have been established in the four years and of establishing an irreversible decline of the poor who may never be able to escape such an underclass.

In our last report on the patterns of poverty, the Southern Regional Council concluded that "poverty has never been reduced by being ignored." Today our findings suggest that if reductions of public assistance in the South continue -- absent other significant, improving factors -- poverty, in fact, may never be reduced to levels that existed only six years ago.

Chart #1

Number of Recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)
by year and region

	1980	1982	1984
United States	11,009,928	10,338,149	N.A.
South	2,182,788	1,950,179	2,087,840
Alabama	179,046	150,322	154,558
Arkansas	84,053	62,912	63,440
Florida	274,352	269,073	293,117
Georgia	232,372	239,094	242,398
Louisiana	217,384	191,727	224,574
Mississippi	175,632	143,319	154,939
North Carolina	201,155	168,976	169,755
South Carolina	154,266	134,356	128,392
Tennessee	172,360	146,752	159,288
Texas	318,619	286,017	337,396
Virginia	173,549	157,631	159,983
Border South	561,063	480,558	521,531
West Virginia	77,649	75,446	92,900
Kentucky	173,470	147,828	157,968
Oklahoma	90,964	65,651	78,016
Maryland	218,980	191,633	192,647

SOURCE: Public Assistance Statistics, December 1980, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; November 1981; Quarterly Public Assisted Statistics, July-September 1982, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, September 1984; Aid To Families With Dependent Children . . . In the Southern States: A Comparative Review, Fiscal Affairs and Governmental Operations Committee, Southern Legislative Conference, October 1984.

Chart #2

Change In the Number of Recipients of AFDC
over time by region

	1980-82	1980-84
United States	-671,779	N.A.
South	-232,609	- 94,948
Alabama	- 28,724	- 24,488
Arkansas	- 21,141	- 20,613
Florida	- 5,279	+ 18,765
Georgia	+ 6,722	+ 10,026
Louisiana	- 25,657	+ 7,190
Mississippi	- 32,313	- 20,693
North Carolina	- 32,179	- 31,400
South Carolina	- 19,910	- 25,874
Tennessee	- 25,608	- 13,072
Texas	- 32,602	+ 18,777
Virginia	- 15,918	- 13,566
Border South	- 80,505	- 39,532
West Virginia	- 2,203	+ 15,251
Kentucky	- 25,642	- 15,502
Oklahoma	- 25,313	- 12,948
Maryland	- 27,347	- 26,333

SOURCE: See Chart #1.

Chart #3

Percent of Change In Number of AFDC Recipients
over time and by region

	1980-1982	1980-1984
United States	- 6%	- 3%*
South	- 11%	- 4%
Alabama	- 16%	- 14%
Arkansas	- 25%	- 25%
Florida	- 2%	+ 7%
Georgia	+ 3%	4%
Louisiana	- 12%	+ 3%
Mississippi	- 18%	- 12%
North Carolina	- 16%	- 16%
South Carolina	- 13%	- 17%
Tennessee	- 15%	- 8%
Texas	- 10%	+ 6%
Virginia	- 9%	- 8%
Border South	- 14%	- 7%
West Virginia	- 3%	+ 20%
Kentucky	- 15%	- 9%
Oklahoma	- 28%	- 14%
Maryland	- 13%	- 12%

*Estimated.

SOURCE: See Charts #1 and 2.

Chart #4

Average Grant Per Recipient In AFDC

	1980	1982	1984
United States	$99.02	$104	N.A.
South	$50.65	$54	$56.73
Alabama	$39.01	$39	$39.62
Arkansas	$50.74	$44	$46.26
Florida	$64.70	$68	$74.40
Georgia	$53.89	$64	$67.53
Louisiana	$51.62	$55	$52.98
Mississippi	$29.78	$31	$31.10
North Carolina	$64.46	$70	$71.38
South Carolina	$42.50	$47	$47.50
Tennessee	$43.02	$44	$42.91
Texas	$35.74	$34	$46.55
Virginia	$82.21	$87	$85.85
Border South	$78.51	$85	$81.66
West Virginia	$62.44	$88	$62.17
Kentucky	$70.91	$69	$69.61
Oklahoma	$84.52	$88	$89.49
Maryland	$87.73	$97	$97.78

SOURCE: See Chart #1.

Chart #5

Change In the Average Grant Per Recipient In AFDC
over time and by region

	1980-1982	1980-1984
United States	+ $5	N.A.
South	+ $3	+ $6
Alabama	$0	+ $1
Arkansas	- $7	- $5
Florida	+ $3	+ $9
Georgia	+$10	+$14
Louisiana	+ $3	+ $1
Mississippi	+ $1	+ $1
North Carolina	+ $6	+ $7
South Carolina	+ $4	+ $5
Tennessee	+ $1	$0
Texas	- $2	+$11
Virginia	+ $5	+ $4
Border South	+ $7	+ $3
West Virginia	+$26	$0
Kentucky	- $2	- $1
Oklahoma	+ $3	+ $4
Maryland	+ $9	+$10

SOURCE: See Charts #1 and #4.
(Rounded to nearest dollar)

Chart #6

Number of Persons Receiving Medicaid Assistance
by region and over time

	1980	1983	Change 1980-1983
United States	21,604,567	21,494,240	- 110,327
South	4,234,586	4,079,434	- 155,152
Alabama	324,364	311,348	- 13,016
Arkansas	222,459	190,279	- 32,180
Florida	500,652	555,213	+ 54,561
Georgia	430,255	441,114	+ 10,859
Louisiana	384,549	377,957	- 6,592
Mississippi	306,879	290,483	- 16,396
North Carolina	376,656	349,053	- 27,603
South Carolina	297,503	236,220	- 61,283
Tennessee	354,374	341,243	- 13,131
Texas	716,457	680,129	- 36,328
Virginia	320,420	306,395	- 14,025
Border South	1,175,644	1,125,916	- 49,728
West Virginia	199,211	177,351	- 21,860
Kentucky	410,248	388,041	- 22,207
Oklahoma	253,647	232,512	- 21,135
Maryland	312,538	328,012	+ 15,474

SOURCE: Medicaid Statistics, 1980, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, released June, 1984; Medicaid Statistics, 1983, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, released August, 1984; Department of Medical Assistance, Annual Report, 1984, State of Georgia, November 1984.

Chart #7

Number of Persons Covered by Medicaid
by year and region

	1980	1984	Change 1980-1984
United States	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
South	4,510,984	4,337,815	-173,169
Alabama	423,031	385,379	- 37,652
Arkansas	204,280	159,500*	- 44,780
Florida	458,719	496,229	+ 37,510
Georgia	418,533	426,122	+ 7,589
Louisiana	387,233	380,360*	- 6,873
Mississippi	289,006	275,396	- 13,610
North Carolina	457,246	408,760	- 48,486
South Carolina	299,413*	258,798	- 40,615
Tennessee	428,834	403,641	- 25,193
Texas	743,489	783,437*	+ 39,948
Virginia	401,200*	360,193	- 41,007

* Estimated

SOURCE: Telephone survey by the Southern Regional Council of state departments of medical assistance in charge of administering stateMedicaid programs, November 1984 through February 1985.

Chart #8

Percent of Change In the Number of Medicaid Recipients
over time and by region

	1980 - 1983
United States	- .5%
South	- 3.7%
Alabama	- 4.0%
Arkansas	-14.5%
Florida	+10.9%
Georgia	+ 2.5%
Louisiana	- 1.7%
Mississippi	- 5.3%
North Carolina	- 7.3%
South Carolina	-20.6%
Tennessee	- 3.7%
Texas	- 5.1%
Virginia	- 4.4%
Border South	- 4.2%
West Virginia	-11.0%
Kentucky	- 5.4%
Oklahoma	- 8.3%
Maryland	+ 5.0%

SOURCE: See Chart #6.

Chart 8-A

Changes In Policies Affecting Medicaid Benefits, 1980-1984
by region

	----- Additional Limits -----					
	Additional Co-Payments	Professional Visits	Professional Sessions	Drugs	Hospital Days	Increased Deductible
United States						
South						
Alabama	x	x	x	x	x	
Arkansas	x	x		x	x	
Florida	x		x			
Georgia	x		x			
Louisiana	x		x	x		
Mississippi	x	x		x	x	
North Carolina	x	x		x	x	
South Carolina	x			x		
Tennessee	x				x	
Texas	x		x			
Virginia	x					
Border South						
West Virginia	x					x
Kentucky	x		x			
Oklahoma	x			x		
Maryland	x		x			

SOURCE: Aid To Families With Dependent Children and Medicaid Programs In the Southern States, A Comparative Review, Fiscal Affairs and Governmental Operations Committee, Southern Legislative Conference, October 1984; Recent and Proposed Changes In Medicaid Programs In the Southern States, Southern Legislative Conference, October 1984; telephone survey by the Southern Regional Council of state departments of medical assistance in charge of administering state Medicaid programs, November 1984 through February 1985; also see Alexander v. Choate, 53LW4072 (1985).

Chart #9

Number of Recipients of Food Stamps
by year and by region

	March 1981	Oct. 1983	Sept. 1984
United States	23,006,255	20,914,296	19,778,000
South	7,192,813	6,513,868	6,065,000
Alabama	614,128	618,974	603,000
Arkansas	316,418	296,164	264,000
Florida	980,266	764,157	613,000
Georgia	677,213	555,431	563,000
Louisiana	585,636	597,032	625,000
Mississippi	527,724	517,761	494,000
North Carolina	636,535	509,199	461,000
South Carolina	451,139	412,334	375,000
Tennessee	706,149	574,638	520,000
Texas	1,248,720	1,264,611	1,192,000
Virginia	448,885	403,567	355,000
Border South	1,351,373	1,410,544	1,387,000
West Virginia	241,737	277,632	265,000
Kentucky	540,743	590,245	568,000
Oklahoma	212,761	243,265	256,000
Maryland	356,132	299,402	298,000

SOURCE: Food Stamp Program, Statistical Summary of Operations, March 1981, U.S. Department of Agriculture, August 1981; Food Stamp Program, Statistical Summary of Operations, January 1984, U.S. Department of Agriculture, August 1984; Food Program Update For September 1984, U.S. Department of Agriculture, December 1984.

Chart #10

Change In the Number of Recipients of Food Stamps over time and by region

	1981-1983	1981-1984
United States	- 2,091,959	- 3,228,250
South	- 678,945	- 1,127,813
Alabama	+ 4,846	- 11,128
Arkansas	- 20,254	- 52,418
Florida	- 216,109	- 367,266
Georgia	- 121,782	- 114,213
Louisiana	+ 11,396	+ 39,364
Mississippi	- 9,963	- 33,724
North Carolina	- 127,336	- 175,535
South Carolina	- 38,805	- 76,139
Tennessee	- 131,511	- 186,149
Texas	+ 15,891	- 56,720
Virginia	- 45,318	- 93,885
Border South	+ 59,171	+ 35,627
West Virginia	+ 35,895	+ 23,263
Kentucky	+ 49,502	+ 27,257
Oklahoma	+ 30,504	+ 43,239
Maryland	- 56,730	- 58,132

SOURCE: See Chart #9.

Chart #11

Percent of Change in the Number of Food Stamp Recipients
over time and by region

	1981-1983	1981-1984
United States	- 9%	- 14%
South	- 9%	- 16%
Alabama	+ 1%	- 2%
Arkansas	- 6%	- 17%
Florida	- 22%	- 37%
Georgia	- 18%	- 17%
Louisiana	+ 2%	+ 7%
Mississippi	- 2%	- 6%
North Carolina	- 20%	- 28%
South Carolina	- 9%	- 17%
Tennessee	- 19%	- 26%
Texas	+ 1%	- 5%
Virginia	- 10%	- 21%
Border South	+ 4%	+ 3%
West Virginia	+ 15%	+9.6%
Kentucky	+ 9%	+ 5%
Oklahoma	+ 14%	+ 20%
Maryland	- 16%	- 16%

SOURCE: See Charts #9 and #10.

Chart #12

Monthly Value of Food Stamps Per Recipient
by year and region

	1981	1984
United States	$41.73	$42.33
South	$41.94	$42.89
Alabama	$43.35	$42.62
Arkansas	$39.96	$37.89
Florida	$45.94	$46.16
Georgia	$41.39	$42.63
Louisiana	$41.69	$46.08
Mississippi	$40.05	$42.51
North Carolina	$39.61	$38.83
South Carolina	$41.66	$40.53
Tennessee	$43.60	$42.31
Texas	$43.44	$43.88
Virginia	$40.68	$41.97
Border South	$42.64	$44.56
West Virginia	$41.65	$45.66
Kentucky	$45.16	$46.30
Oklahoma	$35.39	$38.28
Maryland	$43.30	$45.64

SOURCE: See Chart #9.

Chart #13

Percent of Change In Monthly Value of Food Stamps
over time and by region

	Change In Monthly Value 1981-1984	Percent Change In Monthly Value 1981-1984
United States	+ $ .60	1%
South	+ $ .95	+ 2%
Alabama	- $ .73	- 2%
Arkansas	- $2.07	- 5%
Florida	+ $ .22	+ *%
Georgia	+ $1.24	+ 3%
Louisiana	+ $4.39	+11%
Mississippi	+ $2.46	+ 6%
North Carolina	- $ .78	- 2%
South Carolina	- $1.13	- 3%
Tennessee	- $1.29	- 3%
Texas	+ $ .44	+ 1%
Virginia	+ $1.29	+ 3%
Border South	+ $1.92	+ 5%
West Virginia	+ $4.01	+10%
Kentucky	+ $1.14	+ 3%
Oklahoma	+ $2.89	+ 8%
Maryland	+ $2.34	+ 5%

SOURCE: See Charts #9 and #12.

Chart #14

Number of Recipients of Social Security Income Supplement (SSI) by year and by region

	1980	1984
United States	4,142,017	4,033,362
South	1,485,187	1,452,467
Alabama	134,092	130,306
Arkansas	77,800	72,557
Florida	173,620	178,120
Georgia	154,527	151,913
Louisiana	136,545	124,873
Mississippi	111,811	111,529
North Carolina	140,552	137,172
South Carolina	83,405	84,376
Tennessee	130,526	127,997
Texas	261,664	250,247
Virginia	80,645	83,377
Border South	250,297	246,452
West Virginia	41,039	41,203
Kentucky	93,694	96,202
Oklahoma	67,250	59,387
Maryland	48,314	49,660

SOURCE: SSI Payments, December 1980, U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, 1981; SSI Payments, November 1984, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, January 1985.

Chart #15

Change In the Number of SSI Recipients
over time and by region

	1980-1984
United States	- 108,655
South	- 32,720
Alabama	- 3,786
Arkansas	- 5,243
Florida	+ 4,500
Georgia	- 2,614
Louisiana	- 11,672
Mississippi	- 282
North Carolina	- 3,380
South Carolina	+ 971
Tennessee	- 2,529
Texas	- 11,417
Virginia	+ 2,732
Border South	- 3,845
West Virginia	+ 164
Kentucky	+ 2,508
Oklahoma	- 7,863
Maryland	+ 1,346

SOURCE: See Chart #14.

Chart #16

Percent of Change In Number of SSI Recipients
over time and by region

	1980-1984
United States	- 3%
South	- 2%
Alabama	- 3%
Arkansas	- 7%
Florida	+ 3%
Georgia	- 2%
Louisiana	- 9%
Mississippi	- *
North Carolina	- 2%
South Carolina	+ 1%
Tennessee	- 2%
Texas	- 4%
Virginia	+ 3%
Border South	- 2%
West Virginia	*%
Kentucky	+ 3%
Oklahoma	-12%
Maryland	+ 3%

SOURCE: See Charts #14 and #15.

Chart #17

Monthly Amount of SSI Grant Per Recipient
by year and by region

	1980	1984
United States	$167.78	$218.64
South	$135.72	$182.35
Alabama	$130.42	$176.38
Arkansas	$121.92	$163.32
Florida	$155.08	$207.32
Georgia	$135.97	$179.93
Louisiana	$144.31	$192.73
Mississippi	$136.21	$178.92
North Carolina	$134.81	$183.19
South Carolina	$133.84	$178.89
Tennessee	$136.04	$183.54
Texas	$125.83	$170.72
Virginia	$135.50	$183.52
Border South	$146.38	$196.65
West Virginia	$157.44	$212.58
Kentucky	$145.36	$197.10
Oklahoma	$132.25	$175.26
Maryland	$153.64	$208.18

SOURCE: See Chart #14.

Chart #18

Percent of Change In Amount of SSI Grant Per Recipient
over time and by region

	1980-1984
United States	+30.8
South	34%
Alabama	35%
Arkansas	34%
Florida	34%
Georgia	32%
Louisiana	34%
Mississippi	31%
North Carolina	36%
South Carolina	34%
Tennessee	35%
Texas	36%
Virginia	35%
Border South	34%
West Virginia	35%
Kentucky	36%
Oklahoma	33%
Maryland	36%

SOURCE: See Charts #17 and #14.

Chart #19

Change In the Number of Recipients of Major Poverty Programs
1980 - 1984

	AFDC	Medicaid	Food Stamps**	SSI	Total
United States	-330,000	-300,000	-3,228,250	-108,655	-3,966,905
South	- 94,948	-173,169	-1,127,813	- 32,720	-1,428,650
Alabama	- 24,488	- 37,652	- 11,128	- 3,786	- 77,054
Arkansas	- 20,613	- 44,780	- 52,418	- 5,243	-123,054
Florida	+ 18,765	+ 37,510	-367,266	+ 4,500	-306,491
Georgia	+ 10,026	+ 7,589	-114,213	- 2,614	- 99,212
Louisiana	+ 7,190	- 6,873	+ 39,364	- 11,672	+ 28,009
Mississippi	- 20,693	- 13,610	- 33,724	- 282	- 68,309
North Carolina	- 31,400	- 48,486	-175,535	- 3,380	-258,801
South Carolina	- 25,874	- 40,615	- 76,139	+ 971	-141,657
Tennessee	- 13,072	- 25,193	-186,149	- 2,529	-226,943
Texas	+ 18,777	+ 39,948	- 56,720	- 11,417	- 9,412
Virginia	- 13,566	- 41,007	- 93,885	+ 2,732	-145,726
Border South	- 39,532	- 49,728	+ 35,627	- 3,845	- 57,478
West Virginia	+ 15,251	- 21,860	+ 23,263	+ 164	+ 16,818
Kentucky	- 15,502	- 22,207	+ 27,257	+ 2,508	- 7,944
Oklahoma	- 12,948	- 21,135	+ 43,239	- 7,863	+ 1,293
Maryland	- 26,333	+ 15,474	- 58,132	+ 1,346	- 67,645

SOURCE: See Charts #2, 7, 10, and 15.
United States data estimated for AFDC and Medicaid.

* Medicaid data for 1983 reductions for Border South, Chart #6
**Reductions from March 1981 and September 1984.

Chart #20

Decline In Value of AFDC Payments
Difference Between Percentage of Change In AFDC Payments
And Non-Food Cost of Living
1980-1984

	Percent Change In Monthly Value of AFDC 1980-1984	Percent Increase In Non-Food Cost of Living 1980-1984	Difference Decrease in Value of AFDC 1980-1984
United States	11%	30%	- 19%
South	11%	30%	- 19%
Alabama	+ 3%	30%	- 27%
Arkansas	-10%	30%	- 40%
Florida	+14%	30%	- 16%
Georgia	+26%	30%	- 04%
Louisiana	+ 2%	30%	- 28%
Mississippi	+ 3%	30%	- 27%
North Carolina	+11%	30%	- 19%
South Carolina	+12%	30%	- 18%
Tennessee	0	30%	- 30%
Texas	+31%	30%	- 1%
Virginia	+ 5%	30%	- 25%
Border South	+ 4%	30%	- 26%
West Virginia	0	30%	- 30%
Kentucky	- 1%	30%	- 31%
Oklahoma	+ 5%	30%	- 25%
Maryland	+11%	30%	- 19%

SOURCE: See Charts #4 and #5; CPI Reports, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1980-1984; for computation of percent increase of cost-of-living, see "Technical Notes," CPI Detailed Report, February 1980. Change in AFDC payments for the United States estimated.

Chart #21

Decline In the Value of Food Stamps
Difference Between Percentages of Change In Food Stamps' Value
And Cost of Food
1981 - 1984

	% Change In Value of Food Stamps 1981-1984	% Increase In Cost of Food 1981-1984	Difference: Decrease of Value of Food Stamps 1981-1984
United States	+ 1%	21%	-20%
South	+ 2%	21%	-19%
Alabama	- 2%	21%	-23%
Arkansas	- 5%	21%	-26%
Florida	+ 0%	21%	-21%
Georgia	+ 3%	21%	-18%
Louisiana	+11%	21%	-10%
Mississippi	+ 6%	21%	-15%
North Carolina	- 2%	21%	-23%
South Carolina	- 3%	21%	-24%
Tennessee	- 3%	21%	-24%
Texas	+ 1%	21%	-20%
Virginia	+ 3%	21%	-18%
Border South	+ 5%	21%	-16%
West Virginia	+10%	21%	-16%
Kentucky	+ 3%	21%	-18%
Oklahoma	+ 8%	21%	-13%
Maryland	+ 5%	21%	-16%

SOURCE: See Chart #13; Food Program Update For September 1984, U.S. Department of Agriculture, December 1984, CPI Reports, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.

Chart #22

Decline In the Value of Food Stamps and AFDC Payments Difference Between Percentage Change In Combined Value of Food Stamps and AFDC and In In the Cost of Living 1980 - 1984

	Change In Combined Value Food Stamps & AFDC	% of Change In Combined Value Food Stamps & AFDC	% Increase In Cost of Living	Difference Decrease In Combined Value
United States	+ $11.50	+ 8%	29%	- 21%
South	+ $7.03	+ 7%	29%	- 22%
Alabama	- $ .12	- 0%	29%	- 29%
Arkansas	- $ 6.55	- 7%	29%	- 36%
Florida	+ $ 9.92	+ 9%	29%	- 20%
Georgia	+ $14.88	+16%	29%	- 13%
Louisiana	+ $ 5.75	+ 6%	29%	- 23%
Mississippi	+ $ 3.78	+ 5%	29%	- 24%
North Carolina	+ $ 6.14	+ 6%	29%	- 23%
South Carolina	+ $ 3.87	+ 5%	29%	- 24%
Tennessee	+ $ 1.40	- 2%	29%	- 31%
Texas	+ $11.25	+14%	29%	- 15%
Virginia	+ $ 4.93	+ 4%	29%	- 25%
Border South	+ $ 5.06	+ 4%	29%	- 25%
West Virginia	+ $ 3.74	+ 4%	29%	- 25%
Kentucky	- $ .16	- 0%	29%	- 29%
Oklahoma	+ $ 7.86	+ 7%	29%	- 22%
Maryland	+ $12.39	+ 9%	29%	- 20%

SOURCE: See Charts #4 and #12; Food Stamp Program Update For September 1984, U.S. Department of Agriculture, December 1984; CPI Report, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor; (Food Stamp data for March 1981 through September 1984). Part of data for the United States is based on estimates.

Chart #23

Values of Food Stamps and AFDC Payments
As A Percent of Poverty Threshold
(Family of Four)
1980

	Food Stamps Monthly Value	AFDC Monthly Value	Combined Monthly Value	% of Poverty Threshold
United States	$167	$396	$563	91%
South	$168	$203	$371	60%
Alabama	$173	$156	$329	53%
Arkansas	$160	$203	$363	59%
Florida	$184	$259	$443	72%
Georgia	$166	$216	$382	62%
Louisiana	$167	$206	$373	60%
Mississippi	$160	$119	$279	45%
North Carolina	$158	$256	$414	67%
South Carolina	$167	$170	$337	55%
Tennessee	$174	$172	$346	56%
Texas	$174	$143	$317	51%
Virginia	$163	$329	$492	80%
Border South				
West Virginia	$167	$250	$417	68%
Kentucky	$181	$284	$465	75%
Oklahoma	$142	$338	$480	78%
Maryland	$173	$351	$524	85%

SOURCE: See Charts #4 and #12; General, Social, and Economic Characteristics ..., 1980 Census of Population, Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, June 1983. Food Stamp data based on March 1981; part of data for United States is based on estimates.

Chart #24

Values of Food Stamps and AFDC Payments
As A Percent of Poverty Threshold
(Family of Four)
1984

	Food Stamps Monthly Value	AFDC Monthly Value	Combined Monthy Value	% of Poverty Threshold
United States	$169	$440	$609	72%
South	$172	$220	$392	45%
Alabama	$170	$158	$328	39%
Arkansas	$152	$185	$337	40%
Florida	$185	$298	$483	57%
Georgia	$171	$270	$441	52%
Louisiana	$184	$212	$396	47%
Mississippi	$170	$124	$294	35%
North Carolina	$155	$286	$441	52%
South Carolina	$162	$190	$352	42%
Tennessee	$169	$172	$341	40%
Texas	$176	$186	$362	43%
Virginia	$168	$343	$511	60%
Border South				
West Virginia	$183	$249	$432	51%
Kentucky	$185	$278	$463	55%
Oklahoma	$153	$358	$511	52%
Maryland	$182	$391	$573	68%

SOURCE: See Charts #4 and #12; Money Income and Poverty Status of Families and Persons In the United States: 1983, Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, August, 1984; Food Stamps data for September, 1984; part of data for United States is based on estimates.

Chart #25

Decline of AFDC Family Below Poverty Difference Between Change In AFDC Payments and Increase In the Poverty Threshold (Family of Four) 1980-1984

	Per Person Change for AFDC Payment 1980-1984	Per Person Increase In Poverty Threshold 1980-1984	Per Person Decline Below Poverty Threshold 1980-1984	Decline of AFDC Family of Four 1980-1984
United States				
South	+ $ 48	$691.50	-$643.50	-$2,574
Alabama	+ $ 12	$691.50	-$679.50	-$2,718
Arkansas	- $ 60	$691.50	-$751.50	-$3,006
Florida	+ $108	$691.50	-$583.50	-$2,334
Georgia	+ $168	$691.50	-$523.50	-$2.094
Louisiana	+ $ 12	$691.50	-$679.50	-$2,718
Mississippi	+ $ 12	$691.50	-$679.50	-$2,718
North Carolina	+ $ 84	$691.50	-$607.50	-$2,430
South Carolina	+ $ 60	$691.50	-$631.50	-$2,526
Tennessee	+ $ 0	$691.50	-$691.50	-$2,766
Texas	+ $132	$691.50	-$559.50	-$2,238
Virginia	+ $ 48	$691.50	-$643.50	-$2,574
Border South	$ 36	$691.50	-$655.50	-$2,622
West Virginia	+ $ 0	$691.50	-$691.50	-$2,766
Kentucky	- $ 12	$691.50	-$679.50	-$2,718
Oklahoma	+ $ 48	$691.50	-$643.50	-$2,574
Maryland	+ $120	$691.50	-$571.50	-$2,286

SOURCE: Computed from Chart #4.